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PUBLIC NOTICE

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The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) New England District (NAE) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) New England announce the release of the final Regional Implementation Manual for the Evaluation of Dredged Material Proposed for Disposal in New England Waters (RIM). This manual describes regional sediment testing guidelines and reporting requirements for applicants who wish to obtain a Department of Army permit from NAE for proposed dredging and the open water disposal of dredged material projects. The RIM also applies to federal navigation projects. This manual implements the national testing guidelines under Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act (MPRSA) (33 US 1401 et seq.) and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) (33 USC 1344 et seq.), and as described in the testing manuals "Evaluation of Dredged Material Proposed for Ocean Disposal Testing Manual" ("Green Book") and "Evaluation of Dredged Material Proposed for Discharge in Waters of the U.S. – Testing Manual" ("Inland Testing Manual"). The RIM is intended to be used in conjunction with the Green Book and Inland Testing Manual to provide regional supplementary guidance on: permit application requirements, data and reporting requirements, contaminants of concern, species for biological testing, and specific procedural requirements agreed upon by state and federal agencies. The development of the RIM was coordinated extensively with state and other federal agencies and incorporates public input. It is intended to replace the previous regional manual entitled "Guidance for Permitting Tests on Dredged Material to be Disposed of in Open Waters" (EPA/NAE 1989).

NAE and EPA New England issued a proposed RIM for public comment on October 31, 2002. A public information meeting was held on December 3, 2002 to answer questions about the proposed RIM. Public comments in response to the draft were received and addressed in the final RIM. The most significant changes between the draft and the final are changes to laboratory and sampling procedures, changes in reporting levels, and clarification on electronic data submissions.

The RIM is effective for new testing 30 days from the date of this public notice (May 6, 2004). There is a 24-month grace period from the effective date for laboratories to submit Laboratory Quality Assurance Plans.

The RIM may be obtained from the Corps website (www.nae.usace.army.mil) or by contacting Gail French at (978) 318-8077, (800) 343-4789 or (800) 362-4367, if calling from within Massachusetts.

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